

March 12, 2025. Chicago Transit Board Regular Meeting Minutes.

Noticed for 10:00 a.m. Commenced at 10:05 a.m.

AGENDA: The posted agenda for the meeting is available at www.transitchicago.com, "Chicago Transit Board", "Meeting Notices, Agendas, and Minutes", (03/12/2025) (Regular Board Meeting), "Agenda".

There was a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL: Directors: Lester L. Barclay (Chairman), Roberto Requejo, Bernard Jakes, and Michael Eaddy was present.

There was a quorum with 4 members present.

REMOTE ATTENDANCE: Chairman Barclay advised the Board that Director Michele Lee was unable to attend the meeting in person due to a medical emergency. He requested a motion to permit Director Lee to participate in the meeting remotely.

Director Eaddy moved to permit Director Lee to attend the meeting remotely and Director Requejo seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Chairman Barclay advanced the agenda to Public Comments.

Secretary Greenlee advised that the Board Office had received requests for public comments:

- Khosro Adam Beik
 - Following his public comment, Acting President Leerhsen requested that Leticia Nieto from CTA's staff follow up with him regarding his idea about instituting an employee "tip" initiative
- Patricia Puentes

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Acting President Nora Leerhsen gave the President's Report. She stated that one of the most exciting announcements of the month was the frequent network announcement, which was made on March 3, 2025, in which the agency announced that the CTA would be launching a set of bus routes throughout 2025 that will receive ten minutes or better service throughout the day. The first eight of those routes will be put into place on March 23rd. The addition of increased service on these routes is due to CTA's hiring achievements.

The agency has more bus operators not that we had in 2019. The CTA's bus service is regularly hitting over 99 percent of scheduled delivery. The announcement is also evidence to our customers that the CTA is aware of their feedback and that they want reliable, frequent services. This is also an

example of what can be accomplished with additional funding.

Smoking is a complaint that we hear about often and when riders smell cigarette smoke on trains it gives the sense that the agency is not aware or engaged on that issue. Acting President Leerhsen does not want to send a message to riders that the CTA is unaware that cigarette smoking occurs and is a problem.

To address this issue the police and security cameras are concentrated at certain stations that were chosen based on specific complains that the CTA got through our chat bot. She is encouraging riders to use the chat bot to indicate where they may see a smoking complaint because the agency is using those complaints to make real time deployment decisions.

The CTA has 11,000 bus stops, which is a lot to cover hence the strategy that the agency is employing is to concentrate and target resources in a way that people see visibility and consistency. Our employees have indicated that they value the unpredictability of these missions.

Acting President Leerhsen is continuing to reach out to elected officials, employees, riders, and stakeholders across the region. There are two specific announcements in terms of engaging with the public that she is really excited about:

- The first one is that on Friday the agency will launch something called the “CTA Connection” which is a new monthly newsletter that will highlight information that we know our customers want and need, whether that is news about our service, to employee recognitions, to updates on station upgrades and really everything that we want the public to consume. The signup for the newsletter is www.transitchicago.com/newsletter
- Later on, this month, the CTA will unveil its first-ever new podcast. The podcast will be titled Moving Experiences: Stories of the CTA. This is a great opportunity to dive into the experiences, knowledge and background that our employees have. Acting President Leerhsen will host some episodes, and other employees will be invited to host some episodes.

Legislative Work: Outreach and engagement are even more critical given the current situation the agency is in regarding prospective funding and the advocacy that the CTA is doing in Springfield.

In the past month, Acting President Leerhsen has been to Springfield twice. She appeared at a House Appropriations Hearing, as well as the Transportation Working Group conducted by the house. She has also had several other meetings with legislators. The agency is continuing to advocate fiercely for transit funding for the CTA in the region and to continue to highlight the inequities in the current funding structure. She believes that the CTA is making progress.

We are also at a point where we are going to see more concrete discussions about what the impact of not receiving funding will look like. Specifically, the RTA has issued a resolution where they have asked the transit boards to come forth with scenarios for what it would look like if funding was not received, as well as what it would look like if we received the funding at the increased level that we are requesting. Everyone will start to see more details on it in the public arena.

The RTA resolution is a part of a strategy because for many people you have to raise alarms and explain the impact of what not getting funding will look like in order to move them to act. CTA is working hard to ensure that the worst will not happen because the CTA is working hard to make everyone understand the importance of transit.

She noted that the upcoming Tuesday is “Transit Employee Appreciation Day,” where we recognize how special, necessary and appreciated our employees truly are. At CTA we will celebrate transit employees in various ways throughout the upcoming week. The CTA will have signage across the system, content on our new My CTA app, social networking recognition on LinkedIn, as well as a letter that she sent to employees applauding their work that will be posted throughout the agency and work locations.

She encouraged everyone in the room over the upcoming weeks, including the board, to lift up CTA employees by taking a photo with them and emailing the photo to employeeengagement@transitchicago.com.

Acting President Leerhsen then ended the President’s Report.

There were commendations from the board that were given to President Leerhsen and there was discussion regarding the feedback she has been receiving from the employees. The Board also engaged President Leerhsen in a discussion about other strategies that could be employed to advocate for funding for the CTA from Springfield and how the Board can be most helpful.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

Acting President Leerhsen then introduced and commended the CTA employees listed below who received multiple customer accommodations in 2024. After giving brief remarks applauding them for their service, she asked each of the employees to come forward to receive a certificate and take a photo with the CTA Board:

1. Jessica Thomas, Rail Janitor
2. Nancy Espinoza, Customer Service Representative

3. Juan Saenz, Customer Service Assistant
4. Shanna Overton-Wilson, Customer Service Assistant
5. Ronald Carr, Rapid Transit Operator
6. Micah Gray, Railcar Servicer
7. Dorothy Coates, Customer Service Representative
8. China Huey, Bus Operator
9. Darryl Hill, Bus Operator
10. Iris Crawford, Bus Servicer
11. Kelly Holmes, Customer Service Representative
12. Elexa McCracklin, Bus Operator
13. Armand Alickolli, Bus Operator
14. Michael Toomey, Bus Operator
15. Reginald Smith, Bus Operator
16. Thaddeus Moody, Rail Janitor
17. Christopher Keaton, Bus Operator
18. Dishonda Holman, Bus Operator

President Leerhsen then recognized recently retired CTA employee Janet Martin, who has been lovingly known for decades as the Mayor of the Armitage Station. After 30 years of dedicated service, the riders and community who frequented the station where she worked threw her a surprise retirement party that was covered by the local news media.

Chairman Barclay and the entire CTA Board honored her with a special plaque and wished her well in retirement. All of the board members commended the employees and Director Jakes engaged the employees in a brief questions and answers session to ascertain their motivation for providing excellent service and radiating positive energy.

MINUTES: Chairman Barclay asked for a motion to approve the regular Board meeting minutes from February 12, 2025. After being moved by Director Eaddy and seconded by Director Requejo, the minutes were approved with five (5) votes by roll call.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

CTA's General Counsel Kent Ray explained that there would be an Executive Session pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, Article 2C, Sections 1, 11 and 21. Director Eaddy moved that the Board go into Executive Session and Director Requejo seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. The Board went into Executive Session at 11:03 a.m.

At approximately 11:35 a.m. the Board returned from Executive Session.

Chairman Barclay requested a motion to return to open session, which was moved by Director Eaddy and seconded by Director Requejo. The motion passed unanimously following a roll call vote.

AGENDA ITEM 6(A) - CLOSED SESSION MINUTES APPROVAL: It was moved by Director Eaddy and seconded by Director Requejo that the Board approve the closed session minutes from February 12, 2024. The motion passed with seven (7) votes in the affirmative.

AGENDA ITEM 6(B) – SARAH BOWERS v. CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY and CHESTER MATTHEWS / Case No. 2022-L-011028:

General Counsel Kent Ray advised that in regard to Agenda Item 6 (B) the Board reviewed a proposed settlement in the case of Sarah Bowers vs Chicago Transit Authority and Chester Matthews in the Circuit Court of Cook County, Case No. 2022-L-011028.

Director Eaddy moved that the Board approve a settlement negotiated by counsel in the amount of \$3,500,000 (Three Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents and no/100). Director Requejo seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

BOARD MATTERS: Chairman Barclay asked whether there were any Board Matters?

Secretary Greenlee responded that there was one board matter which was to appoint CTA Budget Director Lisa Smith as an alternate to the Board of Trustees of the retirement plan for the Chicago Transit Authority employees. Director Eaddy moved to adopt the ordinance appointing and Director Requejo seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, AUDIT AND BUDGET: The Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee report was presented by Director Bernard Jakes. The committee reviewed the monthly finance report and approved the February 12, 2024, FAB committee meeting minutes. Director Jakes stated that all Committee agenda items, listed on the Board agenda, were presented, reviewed, discussed, and recommended by the Committee, for Board approval. Director Jakes stated that all the approved committee items, 3 ordinances and 10 contracts, were placed on the omnibus for approval by the Board. Director Jakes concluded the Finance, Audit and Budget Committee report.

Director Eaddy moved that the omnibus be approved, and the motion was seconded by Director Requejo. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

All approved March 12, 2025, Board ordinances are available online, at www.transitchicago.com, "Chicago Transit Board", "Board Ordinances", Ordinance numbers 025-26 through 025-37.

CONSTRUCTION REPORT: The monthly Construction Report was presented by Bill Mooney, CTA's Chief of Infrastructure and the DBE/MWBE/SBE report was presented by JuanPablo Prieto, CTA's Director of Diversity Programs.

CONSTRUCTION REPORT: The Construction Report was presented and can be found at:
<https://www.transitchicago.com/board/presentations/>

Following the reports there was discussion about how to improve walkability around the CTA stations through federal STP funding and whether there are any new opportunities to receive STP funding through grants to use on other projects in the same manner the funding was used at the Austin station on the Green Line?

Director Requejo queried:

- Whether the CTA could bring the Chicago Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation to explore how they can support CTA's stations?
- He asked whether the efforts of the current federal administration to eliminate some steps in the environmental (NEPA) review process will positively impact the speed with which the CTA is able to do the 88 improvement projects that are currently in the infrastructure pipeline?
- Whether the CTA is at risk of losing the Connected Communities Grant that was received from the federal government and whether those dollars are safe?
- Given how long the process is to do the full ASP or ADA adaptation at stations, are there any short-term improvements, minor improvements that could make the lives of people easier, even if it is not the fill blown "coverage?" Director Requejo following up this inquiry with a request to receive updates on the "refresh and renew" efforts at the Clinton Station and at the Sheridan / Red Line Station.

There was discussion.

NEW BUSINESS: Secretary Greenlee stated that there was no new business.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chairperson Barclay asked for a motion to adjourn the March 12, 2025, Chicago Transit Board meeting. After being moved by Director Eaddy and seconded by Director Requejo, the motion was approved with six (6) yes votes and the meeting was adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

APPROVED:


Secretary of the CTA Board of Directors

Date:

